

REMARKS

Please reconsider this application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Applicants thank the Examiner for carefully considering the application, for acknowledging the foreign priority document, and for withdrawing the previous rejection.

Examiner Interview

Applicants thank the Examiner for the courtesies extended during the Examiner Interview conducted October 25, 2006. Agreement was reached as to the claim amendments submitted herein.

Disposition of Claims

Claims 1-6, 9-21, 24-36, and 39-45 are pending. Claims 1, 16, and 31 are independent. The remaining claims depend, directly or indirectly, from independent claims 1, 16, and 31.

Claim Amendments

By way of this reply, independent claims 1, 16, and 31 are amended to clarify the scope of the claimed invention in accordance with the agreement reached with the Examiner in the Examiner Interview conducted October 25, 2006. Dependent claims 11-13, 26-28, 32-26, and 39-45 are amended for consistency with amended independent claims 1, 16, and 31, respectively. No new matter is added by way of these amendments, as support can be found, for example, in paragraphs [0080]-[0084], [0103]-[0106], and [0188] of the Specification.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 101

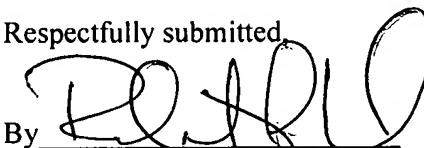
Claims 1-6, 9-21, 24-36, and 39-45 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as being directed to non-statutory type subject matter. *See* Office Action dated September 20, 2006, pp. 2-3. The amended claims recite statutory subject matter as agreed upon during the Examiner Interview conducted October 25, 2006. Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection is now moot with respect to the amended claims. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

Applicants believe this reply is fully responsive to all outstanding issues and places this application in condition for allowance. If this belief is incorrect, or other issues arise, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned or his associates at the telephone number listed below. Please apply any charges not covered, or any credits, to Deposit Account 50-0591 (Reference Number 03226/500001).

Dated: October 27, 2006

Respectfully submitted,

By 

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